NUMB. CCXXV.

The SPECTATOR.

Nullum numen abeſt ſi ſit prudentia —— Juv.

Saturday, November 17. 1711.

Have often thought if the Minds of Men were laid open, we ſhould ſee but little Difference between that of the Wiſe Man and that of the Fool. There are infinite *Reveries*, numberleſs Extravagancies, a perpetual Train of Vanities which paſs through The great Difference is, that the firſt knows to pick and cull his Thoughts for Converſation, by ſuppreſſing ſome, and communicating others; whereas the other lets them all indifferently in Words. This ſort of Diſcretion, however, has no place in private Converſation between Friends. On ſuch occaſions the wiſeſt Men often Talk like the weakeſt; for indeed the Converſe with a Friend is nothing elſe but *thinking* aloud.

Horace has therefore very juſtly expoſed a Precept delivered by ſome Ancient Writers, That a Man ſhould live with his Enemy in ſuch a manner, as might leave him room to become his Friend; and converſe with a Friend in ſuch a manner, that if he became his Enemy it ſhould not be in his Power to hurt him. The firſt part of this Rule, which regards our Behaviour towards an Enemy, is indeed very good Senſe, as well as very prudential; but the latter part of it, which regards our Behaviour towards a Friend, favours more of Cunning than of Diſcretion, and would cut a Man off from the greateſt Happineſs of Life, which are the Freedoms of Converſation with a boſom Friend. Beſides, that when a Friend is turned into an Enemy, and (as the Son of Sirach calls him) a Bewrayer of Secrets, the Man is juſt enough to accuſe the Perfidiouſneſs of his Friend, rather than the Indiſcretion of the Friend who confided in him.

Diſcretion does not only ſhew it ſelf in Words, but in all the Circumſtances of Action, and is like a Guide-Agent of Providence to guide and direct us in the ordinary Concerns of Life.

There are many more ſhining Qualities in the Mind of Man, but there is none ſo uſeful as Diſcretion. It is this indeed which gives a Value to all the reſt, which ſets them at work in their proper Times and Places, and turns them to the Advantage of the Perſon who is poſſeſſed of them. Without it Learning is Pedantry, and Wit Impertinence; Virtue it ſelf looks like Weakneſs; the beſt Parts only qualifie a Man to be more ſprightly in Errors, and active to his own Prejudice.

How does Diſcretion only make a Man the Maſter of his own Parts, but of other Mens. The Diſcreet Man finds out the Talents of thoſe he Converſes with, and knows how to apply them to proper Uſes. Accordingly if we look into particular Communities and Diviſions of Men, we may obſerve that it is the Diſcreet Man, not the Witty, nor the Learned, nor the Brave who guides the Converſation, and gives Meaſures to the Society. A Man with great Talents, but void of Diſcretion, is like *Polyphemus* in the Fable, Strong and Blind, endued with an Irreſiſtible Force which for want of Sight is of no uſe to him.

Though a Man has all other Perfections, and wants Diſcretion, he will be of no great Conſequence in the World; but if he has this ſingle Talent in Perfection, and but a common ſhare of others, he may do what he pleaſes in his particular Station of Life.

At the ſame time that I think Diſcretion the moſt uſeful Talent a Man can be Maſter of, I look upon Cunning to be the Accompliſhment of little, mean, ungenerous Minds. Diſcretion points out the nobleſt Ends to us, and purſues the moſt proper and laudable Methods of attaining them: Cunning has only private ſelfiſh Aims, and ſticks at nothing which may make them ſucceed. Diſcretion has large and extended Views, and, like a well-formed Eye, commands a whole Horizon: Cunning is a kind of Short-ſightedneſs, that diſcovers the minuteſt Objects which are near at hand, but is not able to diſcern things at a diſtance. Diſcretion the more it is diſcovered, gives a greater Authority to the Perſon who poſſeſſes it: Cunning, when it is once detected, loſes its force, and makes a Man incapable of bringing about even thoſe Events which he might have done, had he paſſed only for a plain Man. Diſcretion is the Perfection of Reaſon, and a Guide to us in all the Duties of Life: Cunning is a kind of Inſtinct, that only looks out after our immediate Intereſt and Welfare. Diſcretion is only found in Men of ſtrong Senſe and good Underſtandings: Cunning is often to be met with in Brutes themſelves, and in Perſons who are but the feweſt Removes from them. In ſhort, Cunning is only the Mimick of Diſcretion, and may paſs upon weak Men, in the ſame manner as Vivacity is often miſtaken for Wit, and Gravity for Wiſdom.

The Caſt of Mind which is natural to a diſcreet Man makes him look forward into Futurity, and conſider what will be his Condition millions of Ages hence, as well as what it is at preſent. He knows that the Miſery or Happineſs which are reſerved for him in another World, loſe nothing of their Reality

Reality by being placed at so great a Distance from him. The Objects do not appear little to him because they are remote. He considers that those Pleasures and Pains which lie hid in Eternity approach nearer to him every Moment, and will be present with him in their full Weight and Measure, as much as those Pains and Pleasures which he feels at this very instant. For this Reason he is careful to secure to himself that which is the proper Happiness of his Nature, and the ultimate Design of his being. He carries his Thoughts to the End of every Action, and considers the most distant as well as the most immediate Effects of it. He supercedes every little Prospect of Gain and Advantage which offers it self here, if he does not find it consistent with his Views of an Hereafter. In a Word, his Hopes are full of Immortality, his Schemes are large and glorious, and his Conduct suitable to one who knows his true Interest, and how to pursue it by proper Methods.

I have, in this Essay upon Discretion, considered it both as an Accomplishment and as a Vertue, and have therefore described it in its full Extent; not only as it is conversant about worldly Affairs, but as it regards our whole Existence; not only as it is the Guide of a mortal Creature, but as it is in general the Director of a reasonable Being. It is in this Light that Discretion is represented by the Wise Man, who sometimes mentions it under the name of Discretion, and sometimes under that of Wisdom. It is indeed (as described in the latter part of this Paper) the greatest Wisdom, but at the same time in the Power of every one to attain. Its Advantages are infinite, but its Acquisition easie; or, to speak of her in the Words of the Apocryphal Writer whom I quoted in my last *Saturday's* Paper, *Wisdom is glorious, and never fadeth away, yet she is easily seen of them that love her, and found of such as seek her. She preventeth them that desire her, in making her self first known unto them. He that seeketh her early shall have no great Travel: for he shall find her sitting at his Doors. To think therefore upon her is perfection of Wisdom, and whoso watcheth for her shall quickly be without Care. For she goeth about seeking such as are worthy of her, sheweth her self favourably unto them in the Ways, and meeteth them in every Thought.*

Compleat Setts of this Paper to the End of October may be had of Mr. Graves in St. James's-Street; Mrs. Bond at the Old Vine at Charing-Cross; Mr. Lewis under Tom's Coffee-House, Covent-Garden; Mr. Lillie, Perfumer, at the Corner of Beaufort-Buildings; Mrs. Treganey, near Essex-Street; Mrs. Dodd at the Peacock without Temple-bar; Mrs. Boulter next the Rose Tavern at Temple Bar; Mr. Sanger at the Temple Gate; Mr. Lloyd near the Church in the Temple; Mr. Knapton in St. Paul's Church-Yard; Mr. Round in Exchange Alley; and Mrs. Baldwin in Warwick-lane.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

Never Acted but four times.

By Her Majesty's Company of Comedians,

AT the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane this present Saturday, being the 17th of November, will be presented a new Comedy called The Wife's Relief: Or, The Husband's Cure. And by Her Majesty's Command no Persons are to be admitted behind the Scenes.

AT the Queen's Theatre in the Hay-Market, this present Saturday, the 17th Instant, will be performed an Opera call'd Almanide. The Part of Almanzor to be performed by Mr. Abell. The Boxes 8 s. Pit 5 s. First Gallery 2 s. 6 d. Upper Gallery 1 s. 6 d. The Boxes on the Stage half a Guinea. The two Front Rows of the Pit to be raised in a Row. The Price of the Boxes. No Person to be admitted without Tickets. To begin exactly at six.

For the Benefit of Mr. Anthony Young, Organist of St. Clement-Danes, at Stationer's hall, on Thursday the 22d Instant being St. Cecelia's Day, will be performed a Consort of Vocal and Instrumental Musick, most of which will be entirely new; and the Lay ridge sings that celebrated Song, beginning at Genius of England. Tickets are to be had at St. James's Coffee-house, Tom's Devereux Court, John's in Sweethings Ally, and at Charles Lillie's at the Corner of Beaufort Buildings in the Strand, at 5 s. each.

These are to give Notice, that the Sale of the Cargo of the Oley-Frigat is Adjourn'd till Tuesday next, being the 20th Instant, at nine of the Clock in the Forenoon; at which time will commence at Garraway's Coffee-house, pursuant to former Notice. Note, the Arrack may be again view'd at the respective Warehouses at Buttolph Wharf.

To be Sold (without Doors) by the Merchant, at his House in Mincing lane, next to Tho. Palmer, Esq; a fresh Parcel of new French Wines, viz. Obryan Claret at 3 s. the Bottle, 3 s. 9 d. the Flask, Hermitage and Burgundy at 5 s. the Flask.

Wines to be sold by Retail.

Excellent Red and White Port, and Red and White Lisbon, being neat Wines as they came from the Grape, of the Growth in Portugal. To be sold by the Importer in a Vault in Bennet Court in Philpot Lane, viz. Red and White Port at 5 l. per Pipe, 3 l. or 14 l. per Hhd. Red and White Lisbon at 5 l. 6 d. per Pipe, 3 l. or 16 l. per Hhd. Attendance will be given every Day and at Night.

At the Mountain Wine-Cellar under the Rose in South-ha Coffee house in Broad-street, is sold by retale excellent Mountain Malaga Wine at 6 s. 8 d. per Gallon or 1 s. 9 d. per Bottle, and Red Vidna Wine at 13 d. per Bottle; such Persons as take 5 Gallons shall pay but 12 s. there being 13 Bottles, warranted neat and pure from the Grape.

In pursuance of the Articles for Establishing a Mutual Contribution for enlarging Provisions for Children, at the Office in Ironmonger Lane, a Dividend of the said Contribution is to be paid to the several Contributors: All Persons concerned are desired to take Notice, that they make their Re-entrys on the Lives of Children born, and young Children, and also pay the Second Monthly Payment with their Quarterage on Births (due at Michaelmas last) on or before the 24th of this Instant, or you'll be excluded all Benefit of the said Society. N. B. a Dividend on Young Children will be made at Christmas next, and daily Attendance given at the Office for Transacting the Affairs of the said Contribution.

The Delightful Chymical Liquor, for the Teeth, and Gums. Which in a Moment makes the most Stinking Breath Smell delicately Fine and Charming, and in very little infallibly Cures it, so that an offensive Breath will not remain. It certainly makes the blackest and most foul Teeth perfectly white, and Beautiful to a Miracle; Cures the Scurvy in the Gums, the most inveterate, making the Flesh grow again, when almost Lost, and infallibly fastens loose Teeth to Admiration, even in old People, who often falsly think their Age to be the Occasion for short for delightfully Perfuming, and quickly Curing an ill Breath, for presently making the blackest Teeth most excellent White, certainly fastning them when Loose, effectually preserving them from Rotting or Decaying, and after dly Curing the Scurvy in the Gums, it has not its Equal in the Universe, as Abundance of the Nobility and Gentry throughout the Kingdom have Experienced. It is sold by Mr. Payn's a Toy Shop at the Angel and Crown in St. Paul's Church-Yard, near Cheap side, at 2 s. 6 d. a Bottle with Directions.

At the Griffin in Long-lane is a Stable of very fresh Horses to be Sold, some of which are very fit for Officers.

Bibliotheca Streterriana; Being a Catalogue of the Libraries of the Late Mr. Streeter, (Serjeant Painter to K. Charles, James, William, and Q. Anne,) and another Eminent Deceased Person; containing a curious Collection of the most valuable Authors in Divinity, History, Astrology, Physick, Travels, Miscellanies, Law, &c. in Greek, Latin, French, Italian and English. Printed by Colines, Vascosan, Aldus, Gryphius, Stephens, Elzever, and other famous Printers: With several of the Delph. Classicks Printed by the Variorums, &c. Likewise several Manuscripts, and a Curious Collection of Pamphlets. Which will be sold by Auction on Monday the 26th of November, 1711. at the Black-Boy Coffee-House in Ave-Mary-Lane, beginning every Evening at 5 of the Clock, for John Harding, Bookseller, at the Post-Office upon the Bridge in St. Martins Lane. Catalogues are deliver'd gratis by the Booksellers under the Royal Exchange, Mr. Cliffe at the Three Crowns in Chancery side, Mr. Clavell at the Half-Moon in St. Paul's Church-Yard, Mr. Burker in Westminster Hall, Mr. Barnes in the Pall-Mall, Mr. Bateman in St Martin's-lane, Mr. Archer in Russel Street, Covent-Garden, Mr. Carlill in Fleet-street, and at the Place of Sale. N. B. The Books may be viewed four Days before the Sale begins.

LONDON: Printed for *Sam. Buckley*, at the *Dolphin* in *Little-Britain*; Sold by *A. Baldwin* in *Warwick-Lane*; where Advertisements are taken in; as also by *Charles Lillie*, Perfumer, at the Corner of *Beaufort-Buildings* the *Strand*.